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BRIAN PULIDO'S

Lady Death



A MEDIEVAL TALE

Brian Pulido

Ivan Reis

Marc Campos

Chris Blythe



Hope



Marion



Tvarus



Wolf



Henry



Lady Death



THUS FAR IN LADY DEATH

Amidst a harrowing battle between warrior knights and the otherworldly Eldritch, a child is conceived. Blood of both clans, she belongs to neither. The liaison between human and Eldritch is witnessed by Wolf, a Teutonic Knight spared by the Eldritch lord. Years later, the child, named Hope, and her mother, Marion, return to the battle site. Hope is driven by a need to know her true beginnings. Instead she manifests her half-Eldritch nature in front of the villagers and is branded unholy. An attack by the frightened villagers, led by farmer Henry, leads to the river. Hope and her mother are drowned, but a visit by her Eldritch father, Tvarus, returns Hope from the beyond, ready for vengeance against the villagers, newly reborn as Lady Death.

NOVGOROD.



TO HENRY HEINEMANN, A GREAT AND NOBLE MAN WHO SAVED OUR VILLAGE FROM THE ELDRITCH!



FORGIVE ME FOR INTERRUPTING YOUR MERRIMENT--





--MURDERERS!

IT'S THE
WITCH! I--I
HELD HER DOWN.
SHE--SHE WAS
DEAD!

I LEFT
HER DROWNED IN
THE RIVER!



LOOK AT HER FACE! SHE'S CHANGED!

WHERE DID SHE GET THAT COSTUME?

HENRY, THIS IS YOUR FAULT.

SHE WAS DEAD, I TELL YOU!



YES, I WAS DEAD. I WATCHED YOU STEAL MY MOTHER'S LIFE FROM HER AND THEN YOU SENTENCED ME TO A WATERY GRAVE AND LEFT ME FOR DEAD.

BUT FOR SOME REASON, SOME *UNHOLY* REASON, I'VE BEEN GRANTED A RETURN.



WE'VE KILLED YOU ONCE, YOU PALE-SKINNED WITCH, AND WE WILL DO IT AGAIN.



MY MOTHER AND I WERE JUST PASSING THROUGH! WHAT DID WE DO TO DESERVE--

FSSSHH




DON'T TRY TO ELICIT
PITY FROM *US*. YOUR
KIND DESTROYED THIS
VILLAGE'S SOUL! YOUR
MOTHER CONSORTED
WITH AN *ELDRITCH*
HIGH LORD!

IT MAY HAVE
BEEN DISGUISED
BEFORE, BUT NOW
IT IS PLAIN.

YOU ARE
ELDRITCH!

I AM A
WOMAN!



I PRAYED FOR THE MEANING
OF ALL THIS AND I'VE NOT
BEEN ANSWERED, BUT
STANDING HERE NOW,
I *KNOW*.

I'VE RETURNED
FROM THE DEAD FOR
VENGEANCE!




TO MAKE
WHAT YOU ALL
DID *RIGHT*
AGAIN!

ERGH!



TO
MAKE YOU
PAY!



YOU ARE
AN ATROCITY!
A FREAK!

WHAT I
AM IS YOUR
DEATH!





YOU CAN COME BACK AGAIN AND AGAIN, BUT EVERY TIME WE'LL BEAT YOU DOWN!

PREPARE TO MEET OBLIVION, ELDRITCH!

I COMMAND YOU, **HOLD!**



I SAID **HOLD!**

WOULD YOU DENY WOLFRAM VON BACH, TEUTONIC KNIGHT IN THE SERVICE OF POPE PAUL V, HIS SACRED DUTY OF DESTROYING THIS INFERNAL CREATURE?

OR WILL I HAVE TO REPORT YOUR VILLAGE TO HIS EXCELLENCY?



OF COURSE NOT, SIR KNIGHT. WE ONLY SOUGHT TO AID THE POPE'S MISSION.



STAND BACK FROM HER!



SHE IS
AN UNUSUAL
ONE.

YES. VERY
UNUSUAL. SHE
BEARS FURTHER
INVESTIGATION.

WHO
KNOWS WHAT
SECRETS SHE
HIDES?



YOU'VE
DONE WELL THIS
NIGHT.

HIS
EXCELLENCY WILL
BE PROUD OF ALL
NOVGOROD.

AND NOW,
YOU MUST EXCUSE
ME. THERE'S WORK
TO BE DONE
ELSEWHERE.

?



HELLO?
ARE YOU
COMING TO?
YOU'VE BEEN
OUT FOR
HOURS.



HOPE?

GET
AWAY FROM
ME!

YOU--
YOU KNOW
MY NAME?



MINE'S WOLFRAM
VON BACH--WOLF,
AND I KNOW A LOT
ABOUT YOU. FOR
INSTANCE, I KNOW
YOUR FATHER.

I'M NOT
HERE TO HURT
YOU, HOPE.
I SAVED YOU
FROM THAT
MOB.



MY FATHER? HOW
IS THAT POSSIBLE?
YOU ARE HUMAN, HE'S
ELDRITCH. THERE
IS NO COMMON
GROUND.

IT'S--
COMPLICATED.

I'M SORRY
I WASN'T ABLE
TO PREVENT YOUR
MOTHER'S DEATH...
OR YOUR OWN.

MOTHER.



I THOUGHT YOU
MIGHT WANT TO PAY
YOUR RESPECTS IN
PRIVATE AND AFFORD
YOUR MOTHER THE
PRIVILEGE OF A
RESPECTABLE
BURIAL.



SHE WAS ALWAYS
LOOKING OVER
HER SHOULDER
AS IF SOMETHING
WAS AFTER
HER.

THERE WAS
SUCH SADNESS
IN HER EYES.
NOW I KNOW
WHY.

SHE
WANTED
SO MUCH
FOR ME,
FOR MY
LIFE.




BUT
HER PAST
CAME BACK
TO HAUNT
US BOTH.

I BLAME
MY FATHER
FOR THIS.

BELOVED
MARION

1187-1225



HOW DID
YOU DO
THAT?

I DON'T KNOW.
I JUST FELT
IT.

WE WERE
ALWAYS RUNNING,
MY MOTHER AND I.
YOU KNOW SOMETHING
ABOUT THE REASON
FOR THAT, DON'T YOU?

YOUR MOTHER
AND AN ELDRITCH
HIGH LORD NAMED
TVARUS HAD A PRIVATE
RENDEZVOUS DURING
THE NOVGOROD
MASSACRE.

WHEN SHE
LEARNED WHAT
ELSE HAD OCCURRED
ON THAT BLOODY
NIGHT SHE FLED,
RIGHTLY FEARING
REPRISAL.



I'LL
REVEAL MORE,
BUT WE HAD BEST
BE ON OUR WAY.
THE VILLAGERS
MAY BE WISE TO
MY LITTLE
RUSE.

I
NEED JUST
A MOMENT
MORE.



I LOVE
YOU, MOTHER.
I'LL ALWAYS
LOVE YOU.

I PROMISE
YOUR DEATH
WON'T BE
IN VAIN.

I PROMISE
TO MAKE THE
ONES WHO DID
THIS PAY FOR IT
WITH THEIR
LIVES.



I
WANT TO
KNOW WHAT
IS GOING
ON.

WHY
DID I COME
BACK TO LIFE
AND NOT MY
MOTHER?

WHY AM I
DRESSED IN THIS
STRANGE GARB? WHY
DO THESE UNHOLY
MAGICAL SPELLS
COME SO EASILY
TO MIND?



NONE
OF THIS
MAKES
SENSE!



IT ALL
MAKES
PERFECT
SENSE.



STEADY,
BOY, IT'S ALL
RIGHT.

HE SENSES
THE SPIRITS
HERE.

SPIRITS?

THIS
CHURCH WAS
DECONSECRATED
WHEN THE PLAGUE
PASSED THROUGH.
SOME SAY SPIRITS
OF THE DEAD
STILL HAUNT
IT.

I COME
HERE BECAUSE
THE FEAR OF
THEM KEEPS
THE LIVING
AT BAY.

HUFF~

DO YOU HAVE ANSWERS
FOR ME OR WILL YOU KEEP ME
WAITING FOREVER?

PATIENCE,
HOPE.

YOU
ARE PART
HUMAN AND
PART ELDRITCH,
WITH THE BEST
QUALITIES OF
BOTH.

THE
ELDRITCH
ARE FAST
AND WIELD
MAGIC.

I HAVE WATCHED YOU
GROW UP FROM AFAR. AT
FIRST, YOU SHOWED NO
SIGNS OF YOUR ELDRITCH
SIDE, BUT AS YOU
FLOWERED, IT BECAME
UNMISTAKABLE.

THAT'S WHY YOUR
MOTHER WAS ALWAYS
MOVING FROM CITY TO
CITY. SHE WAS AFRAID
THAT SOMEONE WOULD
LEARN HER TERRIBLE
SECRET.

HUMANS ARE
STRONG AND
PERSISTENT.

YOU MUST
HAVE **WILLED**
YOUR ATTIRE INTO
EXISTENCE. IT WAS
AN UNCONSCIOUS
DESIRE MADE
MANIFEST, LIKE
THE GRAVESTONE
SCULPTURE.

WHY
DID THIS
HAPPEN
ONLY
NOW?

HOW
DO YOU
KNOW ALL
THIS?

I WAS AT THE NOVGOROD
MASSACRE. I OWE YOUR
FATHER MY LIFE.

SAVING
YOU BALANCES
THE DEBT.

IS THAT WHAT
THIS IS ABOUT?
A DEBT TO
SETTLE?

THAT'S PART
OF IT.

WHAT DO YOU
REMEMBER?



HERE MY BLOOD, BE TOUCHED BY MY MAGIC.

THERE WAS A FLASH AND I SAW A MAN I KNEW TO BE MY FATHER.

I WAS TRAPPED UNDER THE ICY WATER. HE HELD OUT HIS HAND AND IMPARTED SOME UNEARTHLY ENERGY TO ME.



IT MADE ME FEEL AS IF I COULD DO ANYTHING.

HE GAVE ME MY LIFE BACK, AND MORE.




HOW CAN I EVER REPAY HIM?




BEFORE YOU BECOME ENAMORED OF THEM, THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOUR KINDRED.




THE ELDRITCH ARE AN ANCIENT RACE OF MAGICAL BEINGS WHO WORSHIP THE DARK LORDS OF CHAOS. THEY WERE HERE LONG BEFORE HUMANITY.



"THEY HAVE PLACED
THEMSELVES ABOVE
GOD AND MAN.



"TO THEM, HUMANITY IS BUT A
ROACH, A NUISANCE THAT IS
TO BE ELIMINATED BEFORE IT
CORRUPTS THEIR TERRITORY.



"SO THEY SLAUGHTER
US, TAKING PLEASURE
IN THE KILL.

"THEY MUST
BE STOPPED!



"TO ALLOW THEM MERCY IS TO SEE
THE WORLD OF MAN CONQUERED.

"DEFENDING HUMANITY AGAINST THEM IS
THE HOLY PURPOSE OF THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS."

WHY COME
TO MY AID
THEN?

MY DEBT TO
YOUR FATHER
IS THEREBY
REPAID.

WHEN
NEXT WE
MEET, I
MAY SLAY
HIM.

"THEY CARE NOT
FOR RIGHT OR WRONG
OR GOOD AND BAD.

"THEY ARE IMPULSIVE, SOULLESS.
THEY LIVE ONLY FOR THEIR WHIMS
AND TO PLEASE THEIR SENSES
AND FOR THAT THIN CAUSE,
THOUSANDS OF US HAVE DIED.



I MUST
OPPOSE YOU
IN THAT,
WOLF.

I'VE
LOST MY
MOTHER, I
DO NOT WANT
TO LOSE MY
FATHER ALSO.



I WOULD
RATHER YOU
JOIN ME.



AGAINST MY
BLOOD?

WHO IS
YOUR BLOOD?
HUMANITY?
ELDRITCH? YOU
ARE PART OF BOTH,
YET YOU ARE
NEITHER.

YOU SHOULD
EXPERIENCE THE
ELDRITCH CULTURE
BEFORE YOU CHOOSE
A SIDE. THAT IS, IF
THEY WILL ACCEPT
YOU.

ACCEPT
ME?



I DOUBT
THEY WILL. YOU
RESEMBLE THAT
WHICH THEY
DESPISE.

WHATEVER
YOUR CHOICE, YOU
MUST BE TRAINED
IN THE ARTS OF
COMBAT.



COMBAT?
WHY?



LOOK AT
YOURSELF.

IF YOU
WANT TO
LIVE, YOU MUST
LEARN TO
SURVIVE.

DEAR
LORD.



ATTACK!



CLUMSY.



OBVIOUS.



YOU LEFT
YOURSELF OPEN
FOR *THIS*!

PRACTICE
YOUR DRILLS,
HOPE. I'VE
THINGS TO
DO.



BRIMSTONE. TVARUS'
ENCHANTED SWORD.
YOU ARE A DEADLY
BEAUTY.



AND MY OWN
BLADE, CHALLENGER,
HANDS DOWN TO
ME THROUGH THE
GENERATIONS.



I FEAR IT WILL TAKE BOTH
OF YOU FORGED INTO ONE
MIGHTY WEAPON TO
PROTECT HOPE.



ATTACK!



WHAT AM I DOING HERE?
I AM NO WARRIOR.
I WANT TO BE A MISSIONARY,
NOT A MURDERER!

CHILDHOOD LIES BEHIND YOU,
HOPE. CONTINUE YOUR DRILLS.



MY EYES DECEIVE ME!



THE METALS REFUSE TO MERGE!



"PERHAPS UNITING THE TWO SWORDS IS A MISTAKE."

I MISS YOU, MOTHER.



ATTACK!



WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS FOR ME? IT WILL PUT YOU AT ODDS WITH THE CHURCH.



I HAVE MY REASONS. WE'LL LEAVE IT AT THAT FOR NOW.

UGH!



KRSCSH



SEEMS YOU OWE ME YOUR LIFE.

INDEED.

GOOD WORK. MORE DRILLS.

AND THANKS.



I SEE THE METALS HAVE FINALLY MERGED, LEAVING A DARK CORE.



HOW FITTING, LIKE THE VERY CONFLICT OUR RACES ALLOW TO FESTER.



"BLACKHEART, THAT WILL BE THIS SWORD'S NAME."



HELLO?

WOLF?
IS THAT
YOU?



WHAT
ARE
YOU?

WHAT
ARE WE?

WE ARE
INSULTED!

ALL KNOW
WE ARE **GREELUM**,
MASTERS OF TRADE
AND COMMERCE.

IT'S YOUR
LOVELY JEWELRY
WE SCENTED AND
WILL HAVE.



NO!



GIVE US THE TRINKETS,
PALE ONE, AND WE'LL
BE ON OUR WAY.



WOLF!







THIS IS BLASPHEMY!
I MUST ALERT THE
AUTHORITIES!



HELP!



**COME
QUICKLY!**

THERE'S
AN ELDRITCH
WITCH AND A
KNIGHT HOLED
UP AT THE OLD
CHURCH!



A KNIGHT
IN LEAGUE
WITH AN
ELDRITCH?

**VILE
THOUGHT!**

TAKE
US TO THE
TURNCOAT
NOW!



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